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REVIEW

DRAFT SUTHERLAND SHIRE ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2013

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INTRODUCTION

Arguably, any amendments to Draft Sutherland Shire Local Environmental Plan 2013 [DSSLEP2013] should be made with consideration to the Aims of that plan, particularly parts:

1.2 [2]

[a] To deliver the **community's vision** for the Sutherland Shire by achieving an **appropriate balance** between development and management of the environment that will be ecologically sustainable, socially equitable and economically viable.

[b] to establish a broad planning framework **for controlling development, minimising adverse impacts of development, protecting areas from inappropriate development, and promoting a high standard of urban design,**

[c] **protect and enhance the amenity** of residents, workers and visitors in localities throughout the Sutherland Shire,

[e] **concentrate development in localities with adequate infrastructure** accessible to transport and centres

[i] **provide leisure and recreation opportunities** to suit the needs of the changing population,

[j] **meet the future housing needs** of the population of Sutherland Shire.

It seems the only aim of the amended DSSLEP2013 is that of 1.2 [2] [j] "meet future housing needs"

It is recognised that the Sutherland Shire Councils is compelled by the NSW state government to meet the target of 10100 extra dwellings, set out in the draft South Subregion Strategy, by 2032, or risk its implementation by an Administrator, but this does not mean implementing that edict without due consideration of Council's set down Aims of DSSLEP2013.

It is here that that the process is flawed. Council is expected to increase the Sutherland Shire population density without consideration of the above aims of the DSSLEP2013.

A map is included, showing Town Centres, Industrial areas, main arterial roads, and commuter and access roads to help understand the context of this review.

TOWN CENTRES

The draft South Subregion Strategy requires that 80% of target number of dwelling be located in Town Centres. If building heights are increased without addressing the impact on the surrounding infrastructure, the traffic and parking problems that now exist will be exacerbated.

"Shop top residential" towers in the town centres, is seen as preferable, close to public transport infrastructure, and supposedly to increase the vibrancy and economy of the town centres. However this increase in population density brings with it Increased number of vehicles to the precincts:

- Vehicles owned by the residents
- Vehicles belonging to visitors to the residents
- Vehicles owned by people bringing their custom to the town centres
- Delivery and staff owned vehicles servicing the retail and commercial facilities in the town centres.

This increase in vehicular movement and parking will compete for parking spaces with those vehicles used by commuters to travel to the town centre transport hubs. This is evident, now, in both Sutherland and Cronulla town precinct and it is proposed to increase the present densities of these town centres.

OPPORTUNITIES

It makes sense to concentrate high density housing in town centres but not without considering an appropriate Town Plan. Attention is drawn to DSSLEP Parts 1.2[2], in particular, [b] **controlling development, minimising adverse impacts of development, protecting areas from inappropriate development, and promoting a high standard of urban design;** and [c] **protect and enhance the amenity.....** Clause [e] should also be considered, but '... localities with adequate infrastructure,' appears to be a subjective concept, determined by NSW Government.

Sutherland Shire Council has the opportunity to plan the town centres so that the impact of the high density towers is minimised on the public amenity of the Town Centres. This can be achieved by:

- Widening the streets on which high rise building is encouraged while promoting public space around the base of each building. This allows through traffic flow and lessens the effect of 'canyoning' caused by adjacent high rise buildings.
- Build wide pedestrian footpaths in the town centres. Footpaths should include a frontage zone, a section of the footpath that functions as an extension of the building, whether through entryways or street dining, and a pedestrian zone that ensures pedestrians have a safe and adequate place to walk.
- Encourage tall 'thin' buildings, and discourage tall 'fat' buildings like the structure at the western end of Caringbah shopping strip on the Kingsway, and that under construction on the eastern side of Rocky Point Road at San Souci. This mass of built form should not be allowed in Sutherland Shire.
- Developers to contribute part of their site to road widening [if necessary] or increase setbacks to protect and enhance public amenity, as well as cash contributions.

CARINGBAH

The area bounded by Willarong Road, President Avenue, High Street and Caringbah road [Woolworths site] is a case in point. During the day parking opportunities in Willarong Road are minimal; car parking both sides of High street, south of the Woolworths site reduces the trafficable road to one narrow lane. Woolworths car park is at capacity at peak periods again causing overflow

parking into the adjacent streets. Traffic leaving the Woolworths site is forced on to President Avenue from Willarong Road and High Street. Many drivers make an illegal right hand turn from Woolworths into Willarong road, across double lines on the road, to avoid having to travel through the junction of the Kingsway and President Avenue to gain access to Port Hacking Road.

Cars parked in High Street and Willarong Road belong both to residents in the town house complexes behind Woolworths, and to staff employed at the Woolworths site. Had High Street been widened before allowing the townhouse development behind Woolworths then traffic movement and parking could have been improved. This is an example of increasing residential density without considering the traffic movements around the site.

Careful and sensitive consideration must be given to the development of the town centres of Caringbah and Cronulla. Caringbah Town Centre envelopes the junction of President Avenue and the Kingsway. Both these roads are main arterial road providing access to and from Cronulla and the Industrial precinct of Taren Point via Taren Point Road. Taren point Road is a main artery to the City of Sydney.

CRONULLA

Cronulla is a commercial, residential and tourist precinct at the end of the rail line, and the Kingsway. Traffic movement and parking is already an issue in this precinct, particularly on weekends, increasing tension between residents and visitors as they compete for car spaces. Increased housing density in the Town centre will add to this problem. Cronulla already boasts the highest concentration of residential apartment buildings in the Sutherland Shire. The proposed amendments to the DSSLEP2013 are estimated to provide potential for 900 additional new dwellings in the Cronulla precinct, all without an Urban Plan.

SUTHERLAND

As a major transport hub, Sutherland high rise development has created parking problems for residents, visitors and commuters. Commuter parking is currently inadequate and with further high rise development planned will become worse. Traffic movement is particularly heavy over Sutherland station in peak periods, and around the schools in the area with no adequate 'pick up' or 'drop off areas' for students arriving and departing by car. The Schools will be in the high rise residential zones in the DSSLEP2013.

In conclusion, before implementing DSSLEP2013, Council has the opportunity to develop meaningful Town plans for all town centres in the Sutherland Shire so that development within the town centre precincts deliver on the Aims of the DSSLEP2013.

FLOOR SPACE RATIO, SITE SETBACKS AND BUILDING HEIGHTS

FSR, Site setbacks and building height limits control site coverage. In low density zones there is no reason to increase FSR or increase the allowed building height. McMansions are to be discouraged on smaller sites.

FSR is a percentage of the site area, so, large residences, or dual occupancy residences are built on large sites. Current controls are, generally, sufficient to allow adequate single dwellings to be built.

Site setbacks contribute to neighbour privacy and minimise overshadowing and should not be reduced

Building height control contributes the quality and scale of the structure and determines the character of the streetscape. The height control should not be on the overall height of the building, but to the uppermost ceiling of the residence, a height of 6.5m.

MINIMUM LOT SIZES

The minimum lot sizes under SSLEP2006 should be retained.

CONCLUSIONS

- High density residential buildings should be contained in the Town centres close to public transport links
- Identify any impact that building high density residential buildings have on the public amenity of the town centre, including over shadowing, and residents street parking.
- Develop Town Plans that give Developers clear guidelines for development, minimising the adverse impacts of that development by protecting public areas from inappropriate development, and promoting a high standard of urban design.
- All high density residential buildings to be designed to provide access for, and accommodate, elderly and disabled tenants
- Increase parking requirements for 2br units from 1.5 to 2 car spaces
- Manage traffic movement and parking to the benefit of all through sensitive street design. Lanes to be considered in the assemblage of any street to serve all needs, including through traffic lanes, delivery of goods, safety islands, and footpaths
- Minimise building changes in the low residential areas to maintain needs and amenity of 'single dwelling' residents.
- Developers to contribute part of the site to protect and enhance public amenity.

